



6/2/05

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

SB 225 (Brown)

SB 225 would establish the "Agricultural Tourism Zoning Advisory Commission" and require it to report to the Governor and the Legislature on issues concerning agricultural tourism. The bill would define "agricultural tourism" as the practice of visiting an agribusiness, horticultural, or agricultural operation, including a farm or winery or a companion animal or livestock show, for the purpose of recreation, education, or active involvement in the operation, other than as a contractor or employee of the operation. As the manufacturing industry continues to decline, and open space is overtaken by urban sprawl, ag. tourism is increasingly important to the State and local economy, the preservation of farmland, and the livelihood of individuals involved at all levels of the agricultural industry-from planting seeds and harvesting, to food processing and marketing. Ag tourism creates opportunities for members of the public to travel throughout Michigan, learn about food production, and appreciate the importance of agriculture to themselves and to the State.

- The Senate concurred with the House changes to SB 225 [RC 187: 31 yes, 0 no].

FINAL PASSAGE

SB 412 (PRUSI)

SB 412 would include capital maintenance improvements as allowable projects undertaken by the State Building Authority (SBA). The bill would allow the state to bond for repairs to state or higher education buildings such as roof replacement and other high dollar, long term repairs which are depreciable under the IRS code.

- SB 412 was moved to 3rd Reading. No amendments. (6/1)
- SB 412 passed [RC 188: 32 yes, 0 no]. (6/2)

SB 498 (BARCIA)

SB 498 would delay the sunset date on a fee exempting a person from liability after the completion of a baseline environmental assessment. The fee presently is scheduled to sunset on June 5, 2005; the fee under the bill would expire on June 5, 2007. According to the Department of Environmental Quality, it usually collects approximately \$315,000 in annual revenue from over 420 petitions for a determination of liability exemption.

- Committee 1 (S-1) was adopted. (6/1)

- *SB 498 was moved to 3rd Reading.*
- **SB 498 passed [RC 189: 33 yes, 0 no]. (6/2)**

THIRD READING

SB 224 (Van Woerkom)

SB 224 would provide that at least 55% of the loans issued by the Broadband Development Authority during a fiscal year would have to go to rural underserved areas, unless the MBDA did not receive enough qualified rural loan applications to meet the 55% requirement. "Rural" would mean a county with a population under 70,000.

The Michigan Broadband Development Authority provides loans to the public and private sector to expand broadband access for Michigan's citizens and businesses. The Authority serves to attract investment in underserved communities and to expand the availability of affordable broadband service across the state. The goal is to make Michigan more attractive to businesses, which need the ability to access high-speed Internet connections to work more efficiently.

- **Committee 1 (S-2) was adopted.**
- **SB 224 was moved to 3rd Reading.**